her catalog. I showed it to them, apologetically. I knew they'd be insulted. They were.

Gladys also sold computers. She said her "company" would assemble whatever the client wanted. Just like Dell. She didn't know the difference between a Pentium IV and a Commodore 64. She said he could assemble a pentium for me for a few hundred dollars. I didn't tell her but I told the manager. I'd just bought one from the Goodwill for five. The market was flooded. I.B.M. wanted out of the business. I knew a competent programmer who couldn't get work. The manager said if I explained that to Gladys it wouldn't make any difference. She wouldn't get it.

Gladys sincerely believed that one day she'd strike it rich. She spent a lot of money on lottery tickets. She was more likely to get rich that way than through any of her business ventures. She was even more likely to get struck by lightning. Nonetheless she was convinced that one day she'd return as a great lady to the little town she came from. She'd have an estate, money, and time. She'd be just like the narrow-minded duchesses who'd helped drive her out before. She was fifty years old. Caspar said the trouble with people like her was they believed in easy solutions. They didn't understand that you had to work for anything good.

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